

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00

STR-04 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

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TO SECSTATE WASH DC IMMEDIATE 9117

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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USDEL MTN GENEVA

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PASS STR FOR POMERANZ

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, OECD

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT PURCHASING: WOOTTON/DENT LETTER

REF: A. OECD PARIS 28027

B. USEC BRUSSELS 9946

1. IN MISSION'S VIEW WOOTTON/DENT LETTER REPORTED REF A SHOULD BE SEEN IN CONTEXT OF SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN HIGH LEVEL STR AND OECD OFFICIALS IN RECENT MONTHS, IN WHICH QUESTION OF MOVING GOVERNMENT PURCHASING EXERCISE TO GENEVA WAS FREQUENTLY RAISED. LETTER IS ESSENTIALLY ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE USG THAT MAJOR OUTSTANDING ISSUES OF GOVERNMENT PURCHASING CODE CAN, BY VIRTUE OF THE FLEXIBILITY OF THE ORGANIZATION AND THE POLITICAL WILL BEING SHOWN BY AT LEAST SOME GOVERNMENTS, BE RESOLVED IN THE OECD FRAMEWORK. AS THIS DOES NOT SEEM INCONSISTENT WITH US VIEW VOICED AT RECENT MEETINGS OF WORKING PARTY ON GOVERNMENT PURCHASING, NAMELY THAT US WISHES TO GO AS FAR AS POSSIBLE TOWARD A REFERENDUM AGREEMENT ON CODE BY END OF THIS YEAR, WE RECOMMEND US RESPOND TO SECRETARIAT'S INITIATIVE IN AS POSITIVE A FASHION AS POSSIBLE.

2. OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR DRAFTING LETTER INDICATE THEY FEEL THEIR INTERPRETATION OF FRENCH STATEMENT AT LAST MEETING OF WORKING PARTY IS JUSTIFIED BY CONVERSATIONS HELD WITH FRENCH AND OTHER KEY EC DELS AFTER MEETING. WE OURSELVES DO NOT REMEMBER FRENCH DEL SAYING ANYTHING PARTICULAR ABOUT "IMPLEMENTATION IN THE OECD". WE BELIEVE POINT WHICH SECRETARIAT MAY HAVE WISHED TO MAKE HERE WAS THAT IF KEY COUNTRIES WOULD AGREE TO APPROACH SETTLEMENT OF MAJOR OUTSTANDING ISSUES WITH THE PERSPECTIVE THAT THE CODE WILL EVENTUALLY BE IMPLEMENTED PRIMARILY AMONG OECD MEMBERS, IT WOULD MAKE RESOLUTION OF ISSUES SIMPLER, PARTICULARLY IN AREA SUCH AS DISPUTE SETTLEMENT. THIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WOULD AGREE WITH EC COMMISSION DEL'S VIEW REPORTED IN PARA 2 OF REF B. WHILE THIS SEEMS A REASONABLE ARGUMENT TO MAKE, IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT WHAT EC HAS IN MIND REGARDING DISPUTE SETTLEMENT WOULD MEET US NEEDS.

3. IN OUR VIEW THE CLEAREST NOTE IN THE FRENCH STATEMENT WAS THE WISH TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE WORKING PARTY TO A MORE RESTRICTED KIND OF NEGOTIATION INVOLVING THE "KEY

COUNTRIES". THE WOOTTON LETTER HINTS AT THIS WITH ITS SUGGESTION THAT NEGOTIATIONS COULD PROCEED IN THE WORKING PARTY OR "SUCH OTHER BODY AS MEMBER GOVERNMENTS MAY WISH TO USE OR ESTABLISH". WE THINK THIS IS WORTH SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BY USG. IN PARTICULAR WE SHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER A SERIES OF HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS OF 5-10 MAIN INTERESTED PARTIES, MIGHT REACH AGREEMENT ON CODE WHICH COULD THEN HOPEFULLY BE AGREED TO BY OECD AS A WHOLE.

4. IN SHORT, WE THINK THE WOOTTON LETTER SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR THE OPPORTUNITY IT MAY PROVIDE US. UNDER ANY INTERPRETATION OF THE FRENCH POSITION OR ANY DEGREE OF SUPPORT FOR SUCH A POSITION WITHIN THE EC AND PERHAPS WITHIN THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT ITSELF, WE SHOULD SEEK TO USE THIS LETTER TO CATALYZE PROGRESS IN THE GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT EXERCISE.
TURNER

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